

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the objection and the rejections set forth in the Office Action dated September 8, 2003, is respectfully requested. The Examiner has rejected claims 16-21, and claims 1-15 and 22-33 were previously cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicants have amended claims 16, 17, and 21. Accordingly, claims 16-21 are pending in the application. No new matter has been added by these amendments as can be confirmed by the Examiner.

A. Informalities

The Examiner objected to the specification as having certain informalities. Appropriate changes have been made to address the Examiner's objections as discussed below.

First, the drawings were objected to as allegedly including improper cross-hatching lines. During a December 4, 2003, interview, however, the Examiner agreed that the drawing symbols for indicating various materials as set forth in Section 608.02 of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure comprise suggested, not mandatory, drawing symbols. The Examiner also agreed that amended drawings are not necessary since the previously-submitted drawings are acceptable. Therefore, no amendment to the drawings is required.

The Examiner also objected to two typographical errors in the Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments. To overcome this objection, Applicants have amended paragraphs [0037] and [0039] of the detailed description. Paragraph [0037] has been amended on page 14, line 7 to correct the reference number of the shaft from "6" to "56" as indicated by the Examiner. Similarly, Applicants have amended the "catheter connector fiber" as recited in paragraph [0039] on page 14, lines 21-22, to correctly recite the "catheter fiber connector."

Lastly, the title of the invention was object to as allegedly being not descriptive. Without acquiescing to the position of the Examiner, Applicants have amended the title to more clearly indicate the invention to which the claims are directed.

Accordingly, it is submitted that the revisions to the specification overcome the Examiner's objections and that the application is in condition for allowance.

B. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation the indication that claims 16-21 are allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112. Accordingly, it is submitted that independent claim 16, as amended, overcomes the claim rejections such that claim 16, as well as claims 17-21 that depend thereon, are in condition for allowance.

C. Claims 16-21 Have Been Amended to More Particularly Point Out and More Distinctly Claim the Subject Matter that Applicants Regard as Their Invention.

The Examiner rejected claims 16-21 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2, as allegedly being incomplete for omitting at least one essential element. In particular, the Examiner asserts that the purported omitted elements amount to a gap between necessary elements in violation of Section 2172.01 of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's assertions. As is clearly stated in Section 2172.01 of the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure, "a claim which fails to interrelate essential elements of the invention as defined by the applicant(s) in the specification may be rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, for failure to point out and distinctly claim the invention." (See M.P.E.P. § 2172.01 (citing *In re Venezia*, 530 F.2d 956, 189 U.S.P.Q. 149 (C.C.P.A. 1976); *In re Collier*, 397 F.2d 1003, 158 U.S.P.Q. 266 (C.C.P.A. 1968).) Here, the Examiner first alleges that "claims 16-21 do not recite the purpose of the cutouts and their structural relationship with other elements." Amended claim 16, however sets forth a purpose and structural relationship by reciting that "the connector bushing has ribs on its outer surface positioned at, and configured to engage, the cutouts of the retainer for providing proper engagement with a motor unit." Thus, in contrast to the assertion of the Examiner, it is respectfully submitted that claims 16-21, as amended, do recite "the purpose of the cutouts and their structural relationship with other elements" and, as such, the Examiner's rejection is overcome. Accordingly, claims 16-21 are in condition for allowance.

Similarly, the Examiner further rejected claims 16-21 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2, asserting that claims 16-21 omitted “the ribs 127 that works [sic] with the grip area 126 and the cutout 129 to provide a means for grasping and/or transferring force to the catheter fiber connector 122 to push it into proper engagement with the motor unit.” In the manner discussed above, amended claim 16 recites that “the connector bushing has ribs on its outer surface positioned at, and configured to engage, the cutouts of the retainer for providing proper engagement with a motor unit.” Claims 16-21, as amended, therefore do not omit the allegedly omitted element. Accordingly, it is submitted that claims 16-21 are in condition for allowance.

The Examiner also rejected claims 17 and 21 for reciting claim limitations that allegedly lack sufficient antecedent bases. Applicants have amended claim 17 to set forth that the cutouts of the retainer can be elliptical. This amendment is supported by the specification and does not comprise new matter. (See, e.g., Specification at Fig. 8; p. 16, ll. 10-11.) Similarly, claim 21 has been amended to recite that the catheter connector can further comprise a shield that is disposed around an outer periphery of the catheter ferrule. This amendment likewise is supported by the specification and does not comprise new matter. (See, e.g., *id.* at Fig. 8; p. 17, ll. 15-19.)

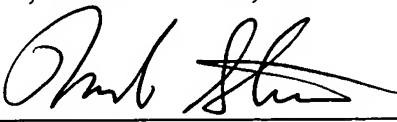
Accordingly, it is submitted that the Examiner’s claim rejections are overcome by the above amendments and that claims 16-21 are in condition for allowance.

Prompt and favorable action on the merits of the claims is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner have any questions or comments, the undersigned can be reached at (949) 567-6700.

Respectfully submitted,

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